

AT&T, he joined then-Congressman MARSHA BLACKBURN's office. When I was elected to Congress, he agreed to postpone retirement to continue serving our district for two more years.

Johnny has been the invaluable link between the work we do in congress and the local communities in the district by being a resource for constituents and community leaders and listening to the concerns and challenges facing rural Tennesseans.

Johnny understands the challenges of our community leaders because he himself has been one throughout his life. For 24 years, he served on the McNairy County Board of Education, including 17 years as chairman. During this time, the Board of Education oversaw two multi-million-dollar building projects in the county. In 1992, he was selected to serve on the All Tennessee School Board. Johnny also served as Vice Mayor of his beloved hometown, Ramer.

Johnny and Linda, his ceaselessly charming wife of 56 years, have three children—Ross, Lora, and Jeremy—and seven grandchildren. Johnny has always sought to put his family first and he is proud of everything that his children and grandchildren have accomplished. He and his family are longtime members of Ramer Baptist Church, where he has served many years as an Ordained Deacon, Music Director, and Sunday School Teacher.

Johnny has done an outstanding job serving the people of Tennessee and this nation through his volunteer work and his professional career of public service, and it has been an honor and a privilege to have him as a member of my staff.

On behalf of the United States House of Representatives, I'm proud to congratulate Johnny Blakely on his retirement and to express our gratitude for his lifelong commitment to his community and his 18 years of faithful and diligent service to the people of Tennessee's Seventh Congressional District.

CRITICAL WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

(Mr. KELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, today's passage of the Water Resources Development Act of 2020, as amended by the Senate, marks a new chapter for a critical infrastructure project that is very important to the residents of Pennsylvania's 12th Congressional District.

The Williamsport levee, located in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, in the heart of PA-12, is in dire need of repair to protect the livelihoods of local residents and businesses.

The flood zone behind the 20-mile levee system is responsible for nearly 87 percent of Lycoming County's economic activity. This area employs more than half of the region's workforce and is home to 24 of the county's 50 largest employers.

This bill authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to carry out a feasibility study of the imminent threat the levee poses to Lycoming County's residents and economy. This study is a precursor to construction and funding for the levee and represents an important

step toward addressing this critical infrastructure need.

I will continue to do everything in my power to work with the Army Corps of Engineers to prioritize this project. Today, we take an important step forward in our community's collective effort to get this infrastructure project across the finish line, and for that, I am grateful.

RECOGNIZING THE LOSS OF BRIGADIER GENERAL CHUCK YEAGER

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise to recognize the loss of a very great American, Brigadier General Chuck Yeager, who passed last evening. He and his wife, Victoria, are constituents of ours in Nevada County in our district in northern California.

Truly, he was an American icon. He inspired the world to push farther and faster and to push the envelope, as they say, a man I was honored to call a friend.

He grew up in West Virginia, a country boy hunting and fishing the hills where he lived. He entered World War II and became one of the greatest pilots that we would know. He had an amazing 20/10 vision that helped him to see enemy aircraft sooner than the rest of his colleagues or the enemy could see ours.

His exploits in the sky continued after World War II, when he was the first man to break the sound barrier in his Bell X-1 aircraft.

Indeed, he was an amazing gentleman. He was a determined man with a lot of grit, provided a lot of help advancing the aviation situation in this country, even just a few years ago, exceeding the sound barrier once again.

He had a straight and dry sense of humor. He didn't have a whole lot of use for politicians. I was lucky to be able to count him as a friend, not as a politician but as more of a neighbor.

We will grieve this man and we will grieve his loss, because they don't make very many like Chuck Yeager. Indeed, he will be irreplaceable.

God bless him and his family.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESSWOMAN ROBY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we will, in short time, remember our friend Paul Sarbanes, but another friend of mine, whom I have not known as long but I have known well, is the gentlewoman from Montgomery, Alabama, with whom I went on the pilgrimage sponsored by Faith and Politics and led by

our beloved John Lewis. She welcomed us so graciously to Montgomery.

She is a graduate of NYU, a graduate of Stanford Law School, and is extraordinarily proud of her father, the chief judge of the court of appeals of their circuit. Her husband, Riley, and their two children I have known, and they have joined us.

Regrettably, she will be leaving the Congress at the end of this year. I say regrettably because she was a Member of Congress who worked across the aisle and who worked positively and constructively on behalf of her district, on behalf of her State, and on behalf of her country. We will miss her.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Alabama.

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Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), my friend, for yielding.

Thank you so much, Leader HOYER, I just appreciate your friendship all these years. I really do appreciate the time you have given me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise before you and my colleagues here today to speak for my final time on the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, 17 years ago, my husband, Riley, and I prayerfully decided I would put my name on the ballot for the first time. Never could we have imagined that that original decision to run for the Montgomery City Council would lead us to serve five terms in the U.S. House of Representatives.

We are so grateful that God allowed us to serve our country in this way, and we give all honor and glory to Him. I count it a great privilege to have served the people of Alabama's Second Congressional District over the past decade, and I cannot adequately express how deeply thankful I am for the confidence my constituents have placed in me over the years.

Each of you sitting here before me knows the responsibility that comes along with being a Member of Congress. Yes, we are required to vote and to be the conscience of those we represent, but serving our constituents back home truly changes lives in our communities for the better.

As I look back on the wonderful things Team Roby was able to accomplish, along with the help of my colleagues in the Alabama delegation, I realized that our most significant duty is to help those who need us. Whether it is requesting assistance with the VA or another Federal agency, assisting with cleanup following a large-scale weather event, voicing an opinion, or booking tours of the U.S. Capitol, my doors have always remained open to each person I represent.

I am thankful for the unique opportunities given to me by those who came before me, especially the chance to serve on several impactful committees, including Committee on Appropriations, Committee on the Judiciary, Committee on Agriculture, Committee on Armed Services, Committee on Education and the Workforce, and the Select Committee on Benghazi. Much